

Geronimo Stilton

MICEKINGS

THE MYSTERIOUS MESSAGE



₩SCHOLASTIC

WELCOME TO THE ANCIENT FAR NORTH . . . AND THE WORLD OF THE MICEKINGS!

WHERE THEY LIVE: Miceking Island

CAPITAL: Mouseborg, home of the Stiltonord family

OTHER VILLAGES: Oofadale, village of the Oofa Oofa, and Feargard, village of the vilekings

CLIMATE: Cold, cold, cold, especially when the icy north wind blows! **TYPICAL FOOD:** Gloog, a superstinky but fabumouse stew. The secret recipe is closely guarded by the wife of the miceking chief.

NATIONAL DRINK: Finnbrew, made of equal parts codfish juice and herring juice, with a splash of squid ink

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION: The drekar, a light but very fast ship **GREATEST HONOR:** The miceking helmet. It is only earned when a mouse performs an act of courage or wins a Miceking Challenge.

UNIT OF MEASUREMENT: A mouseking tail (full tail, half tail, third tail, quarter tail)

ENEMIES: The terrible dragons who live in Beastgard







Geronimo Stilton

MICEKINGS THE MYSTERIOUS MESSAGE



Scholastic Inc.

Copyright © 2015 by Edizioni Piemme S.p.A., Palazzo Mondadori, Via Mondadori 1, 20090 Segrate, Italy. International Rights © Atlantyca S.p.A. English translation © 2017 by Atlantyca S.p.A.

The publisher does not have any control over and does not assume any responsibility for author or third-party websites or their content.

GERONIMO STILTON names, characters, and related indicia are copyright, trademark, and exclusive license of Atlantyca S.p.A. All rights reserved. The moral right of the author has been asserted. Based on an original idea by Elisabetta Dami. www.geronimostilton.com

Published by Scholastic Inc., *Publishers since 1920*, 557 Broadway, New York, NY 10012. SCHOLASTIC and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc.

Stilton is the name of a famous English cheese. It is a registered trademark of the Stilton Cheese Makers' Association. For more information, go to www.stiltoncheese.com.

All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. No part of this publication may be reproduced, transmitted, downloaded, decompiled, reverse engineered, or stored in or introduced into any information storage and retrieval system, in any form or by any means, whether electronic or mechanical, now known or hereafter invented, without the express written permission of the publisher. For information regarding permission, please contact Atlantyca S.p.A., Via Leopardi 8, 20123 Milan, Italy; e-mail foreignrights @atlantyca.it, www.atlantyca.com.

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

e-ISBN 978-1-338-08873-1

Text by Geronimo Stilton
Original title Nella terra degli Uffa Uffa
Cover by Giuseppe Facciotto (pencils) and Flavio Ferron (ink and color)
Illustrations by Giuseppe Facciotto (pencils) and Alessandro Costa (ink and color)
Graphics by Chiara Cebraro

Special thanks to Tracey West Translated by Emily Clement Interior design by Kristine Brideson

First printing 2017



It was a *peaceful* spring evening in Mouseborg, the capital city of Mouseking Island. The **Stars** shone brightly in the sky. A gentle **breeze** blew in from the sea. **Crickets** chirped a

soothing song.

Sorry, I should introduce myself:
I am GERONIMO STILTONORD, and I am a mouseking.
Not a very fierce, fighting mouseking, but a scholarly one.



Chilips

Chirpl





Ow, my back!

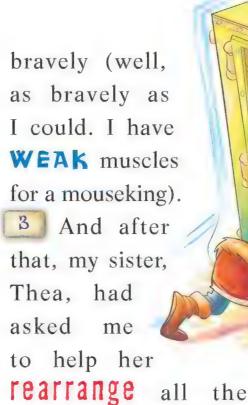
And that night I had returned home after a terrible day!

During morning exercises,

Sven the Shouter, our **Village chief**, had forced me to do 333 sit-ups!

2 At noon, dragons had attacked our village! They were looking to lunch on FRESH MICEKING MEAT. I fought





furniture in her house!

I was so tired that my WHISKERS
WERE DROOPING!

Oof!

So I was very happy to retreat to my house for a *peaceful*, quiet night. My plans included:

A light dinner of aged miceking cheese and herring soup . . .





Reading a book of **LEGENDS** about the famouse miceking **EXPLORER** Erik the Furry . . .

Ending with a **SootHing** cup of tea before bed . . .

I had just finished setting the table when I heard a knock at the door.





Bam! Bam! Bam!

Why, oh why, did someone always have to INTERRUPT me when I was eating?

As I peered through the peephole, I heard the deep voice of our village chief.

"OPEN UP, you smarty-mouseking! So says Sven!" he shouted.

A chorus of micekings behind him cried out,

"SO SAYS SVEN THE SHOUTER!"

Clattering cuttlefish! How many of them were out there? And what did they want from me?

"Well, lazy bones?" Sven yelled. "Are you going to open up?"

You should know that Sven is known as **THE SHOUTER** because he shouts very





loudly! And when he's angry, his **shouts** could make the walls of your house shake. So I hurried and opened the door before the chief could shout again.

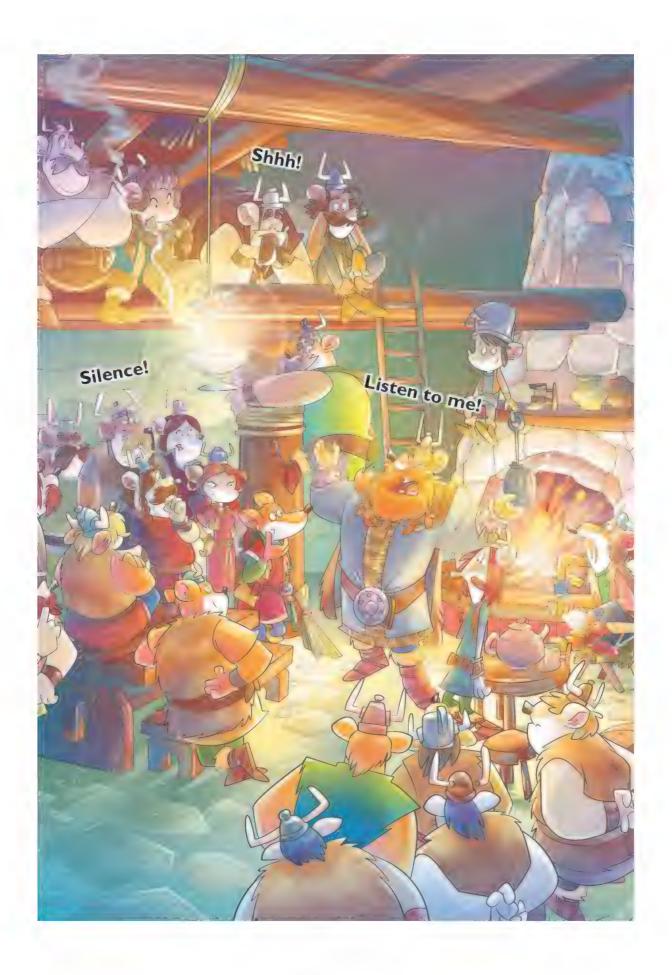
A crowd of miceking warriors pushed into the house. They took seats in my chairs, on my tables, on my bed, and even in the rafters. Shivering squids, Sven had called a meeting of the Miceking Assembly in my house!

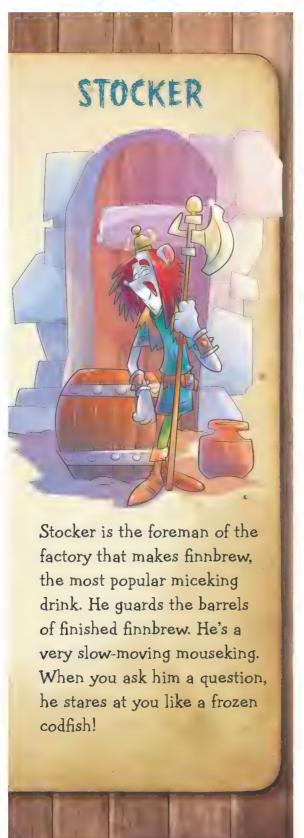
The warriors whispered to one another, "What could it be?" They were excited for a mystery to solve!

Then Sven spoke, "MICEKINGS OF MOUSEBORG, I have gathered you here for a matter of great importance."

The micekings listened in **S***LENCE, leaning forward in their seats.

Sven turned toward the foreman of the





finnbrew

factory. "Stocker! Tell us what you found."

Stocker looked **surprised**. "Me? Found? What?"

Great salty sardines, what kind of mystery was this?



THE MYSTERIOUS JUG

Sven turned as RED as a pepper. "Stocker, stop acting like a **Sea Slug** and tell the others what you told me!"

"SO SAYS SVEN THE SHOUTER!" the micekings chanted.

"Hmm. Let's see," said Stocker. "Where should I start?"

"Start at the BEGINNING!" Sven demanded.

Stocker nodded. "Okay, then. I will start at the beginning," he said. "As you know, every night I take a walk around the outside of the factory."

"Yes, we know," Sven said MPATIENTLY.

"I check to make sure that all the barrels





THE MYSTERIOUS JUG

of finnbrew, left outside to ferment in the **SUN**, have been brought inside," Stocker went on.

"By my beard, get on with the story!" Sven shouted. "At this rate, it will take you all night to tell it."

Stocker's fur was not **ruffled**. He kept talking. "So tonight, during my usual stroll, I **NOTICED** something floating in the water by the dock. So I walked over to get a better **look**, and . . ."

"ARAND?" all the micekings shouted, making my house SHAKE as if it were made of fjordberry jelly.

"And . . . I saw that it was an AMPHORA."

An amphora is a clay jug with two handles. But what was so important about Stocker finding a jug?







THE MYSTERIOUS JUG



"I pulled it out of the water," he continued.

"I opened it. And inside I found

a . . ."

"Aaaaaaaa?" the micekings squealed.

"A parchment!" Stocker finished. "There was a

message written on it, but I don't know how to read, so I ran to Sven."

"And I decided to come directly to Geronimo," Sven said. "Now read this **message**, smarty-mouseking. That's an order!"

"SO SAYS SVEN THE SHOUTER!"

Stocker handed me the parchment, and I began to read the message:





"I declare . . . to shake . . . um . . . strong mouseking! . . . sail the stormy seas . . . um . . . dragon . . . stinkiest you . . . "

"Geronimo, quit **joking** around!" my cousin Trap exclaimed.

"I'm not **joking** around," I protested.

"These are the only words I **UNDERSTAND**.

I can barely make out two runes in a row!"



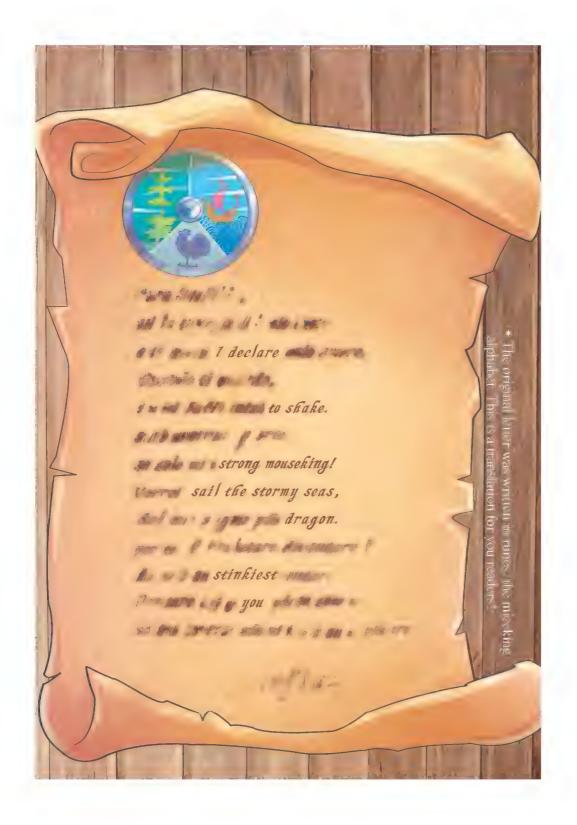


"You're supposed to be the **smarty-mouseking!**" Sven shouted. "Figure it out!"

"But, but, but . . . " I sputtered.

Trap took the parchment from my PAWS. "Leave it to me, cousin! In addition to being an INVENTOR, I'm also an expert at messages in bottles, secret codes, and invisible clues!"







THE MYSTERIOUS JUG

Trap examined the parchment carefully (forward and BACKWARD, UP and DWN, from 61686 UP and FAR AWAY). Then he announced his conclusion: "BRAVE Sven! The amphora probably wasn't closed tightly. The Salt water from the fjord has erased almost everything that was written here. And so . . . the original message is a mystery!"



A Message from Yan the Yawner

While Trap continued to study the message, our village chief paced the floor of my house, muttering about what to do next.

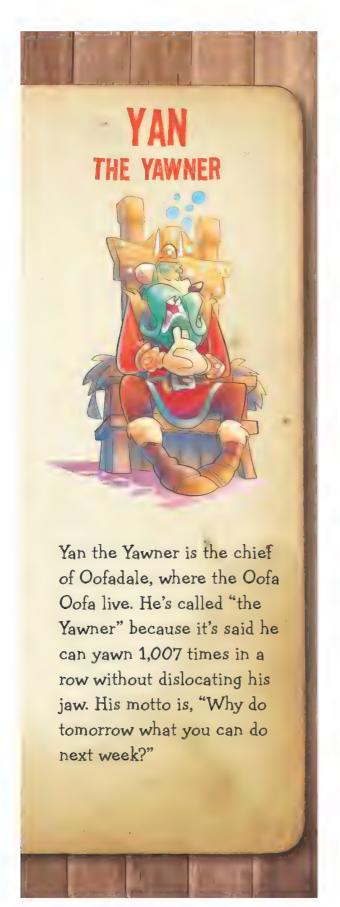
"Holey cheese!" Trap cried out suddenly.

"What's this SEAL at the top of the parchment?"

"Let me see!" Sven yelled, grabbing the parchment from him. His eyes got wide.

"Why, this is the **COAt OF APMS** of Yan





the Yawner, the chief of Oofadale!"

Sven exclaimed.

"Salty sardines!

Then this must be a message from him!" Trap said.

murmur rose up from the micekings. This could be a very important message!

The micekings were jumping out of their FUR with curiosity. They started to GUESS what the meaning

A Message from Yan the Yawner



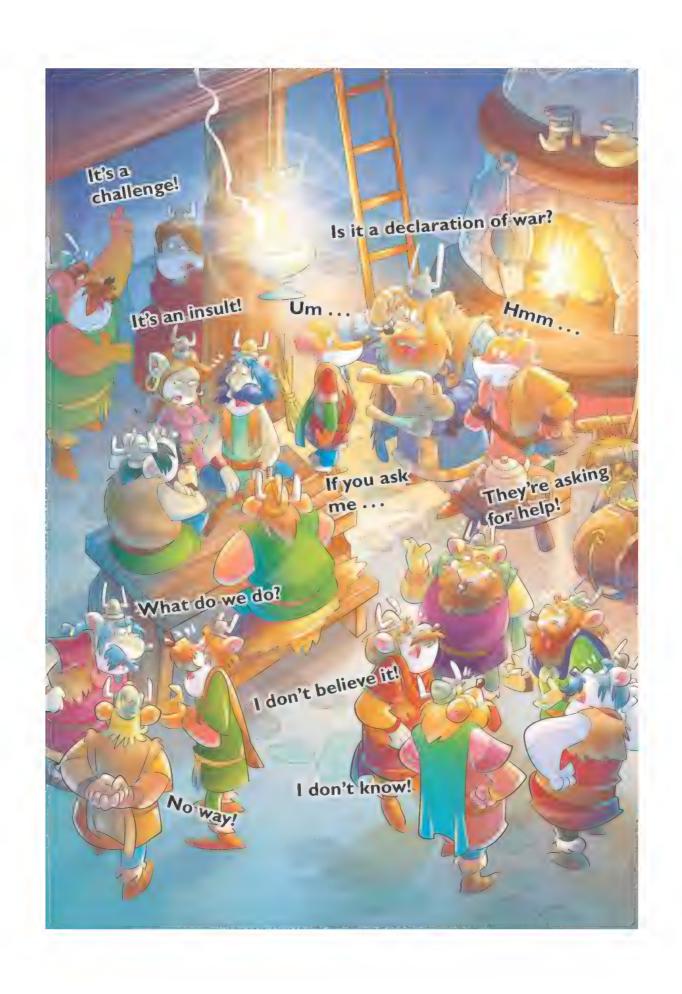
of the message might be, based on the few words I had read.

"Why, it's clear!" declared a tall, muscular mouseking. "It's a challenge sent by the Oofa Oofa! THEY WANT TO ATTACK US!"

"What if Oofadale is being attacked by dragons?" another mouseking wondered. "And Yan the Yawner is asking for help from the **Strong**, **BRAVE** warriors of Mouseborg!"

A third mouseking spoke up. "They're insulting us! They think we're **stinky!**"

I had my own theory. "It could be that Yan was just writing a **simple** message of greeting to a **Priend**," I suggested. "This very well could have been a **PERSONAL** letter that was **IOST** and arrived here by accident. We all know how the miceking mail works . . ."



A Message from Yan the Yawner



But nobody took me SERIOUSLY.

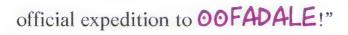
"By my beard, Geronimo, you must be the most foolish smarty-mouseking in miceking history!" Sven scolded me. "Didn't you see the coat of arms? It's clearly an official message of some kind. Therefore we must respond in an official manner."

Sven paced the room, twirling his beard and thinking. The micekings **eagerly** waited to hear our chief's decision. Finally, Sven cleared his throat.

"If the village of OOFADALE is in danger, our miceking honor requires that we go help them!" Sven shouted. "And if they want to attack us, we must be ready to fight back with the strength of Stenchberg cheese! There is only one way to find out what the message really said. We will make an



A Message from Yan the Yawner



"SO SAYS SVEN THE SHOUTER!"





A MESSAGE FROM YAN THE YAWNER



All the micekings cheered with **Joy** at this announcement. They hurried off to prepare for the expedition.

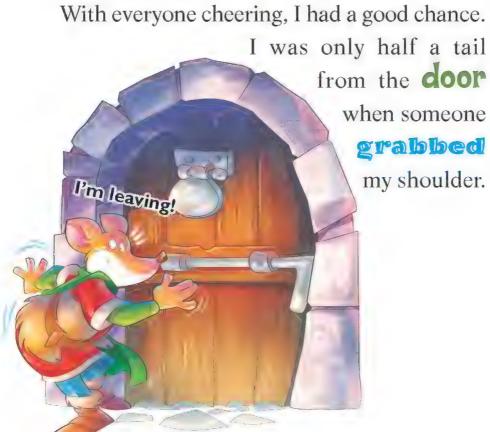
Everyone was excited ... except me!

Great stinky clams, this journey could be risky, DANGEROUS, and FERIL 115!

And I . . . I was a scaredy-mouseking!



As soon as Sven said the word **expedition**, I tried to sneak off without being noticed. With everyone cheering. I had a good chance.





It was Sven. "Geronimo, you **spineless jellyfish**, where do you think you're going?"

"W-w-well," I stuttered. "I just thought I'd go get us some more **finnbrew** and maybe a **snack**. Aren't you hungry?"

"I am hungry for adventure!" Sven replied. "We need to plan."

I tried again. "B-b-but . . . I left my **LAUNDRY** on the clothesline, and, um . . ."

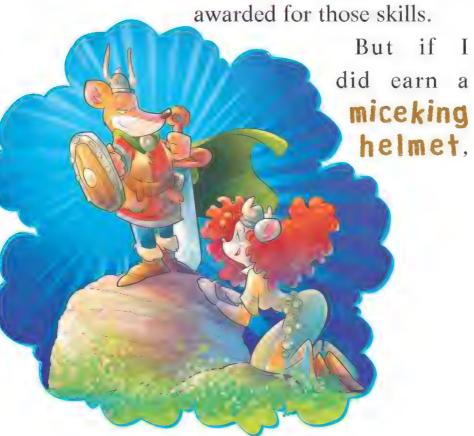
"Stop BLABBERING, blubber head!" Sven shouted. "As Smarty-mouseking of this village, and the Official Reader of Runes, you must be part of this expedition. Don't you want to finally earn your very first miceking helmet?"

I paused. A miceking helmet is the



5

greatest power any mouseking can get. It is awarded to those who show great STRENGTH, courage, and skill in battle. But my greatest strengths are in miceking HISTORY, rune grammar, and fjord Geography, and no helmet is awarded for those skills





then Sven's daughter, the beautiful **Thora**, might finally respect me!

With a far-off look, I daydreamed about my miceking crush. Trap snapped me out of it.

"Don't worry, cousin," he said. "I'll go with you on this mission!"

cousin Trap got involved, he usually tried out one of his crazy **inventions**. He has used me as his official test mouse, risking my every time!

"Why are you so excited to go on a miceking expedition?" I asked **SUSPICIOUSLY**.

"I'd like to see an old friend of mine in Oofadale, Fen WHISKERSSON," he explained. "We went to the Young Miceking School for Inventors





"He's really nice," Trap continued. "I'm hoping to discuss some of my **new ideas** with him."

I groaned. **SHIVERING SQUIDS**, not another inventor! Now I'd have to deal with two of them. Who knew what **dangerous** inventions they would make me try out?



MISSION TO OOFADALE!



Squeak! I really didn't want to be a part of this miceking mission!

But I had no choice.

"I Have Made My Decision!" Sven thundered. "Tomorrow we will SET SAIL for Oofadale at dawn. But I will not be leaving this mission in the Clumby paws of you two CHEESEHEADS." He pointed to Trap and me.

"You won't?" I asked.

"Of course not!" Sven shouted. "I will lead the mission. You two will accompany me. And we will need a team of brave warriors to go with us."

He started pointing to different micekings.

"You! Prepare the barrels of **finnbrew** and the crates of **anchovies**!" he ordered.

"You! Pack the wheels of Colors!



MISSION TO OOFADALE!

"You, you, and you, go shift the helmets and the shields!

"You, go **polish** the Mouseborg coat of arms until it glows like the sun! This expedition will be made in GRAND MICEKING STYLE!"

The micekings all replied together,

"SO SAYS SVEN THE SHOUTER!"



I had trouble falling asleep that night. My whiskers trembled

at the dangers we

might encounter.

HOW, HOW, did I

always end up in these situations?

When the

ROOSTER

crowed at dawn, I put my head under









the covers. I didn't want to go. I was a **SMARTY-MPUSCKING**, not a warrior! Then I heard a **KNOCK** on my door. It was Trap.

"GERONIMODOD!

Come on, Cousin! It's time to begin our great mission!" he shouted.

I tried to get out of it. "Um, I can't find my boots anywhere. You go without me, and I'll meet up with you in Oofadale."

"I can tell when you're lying, Cousin," Trap said. "Open the door!"

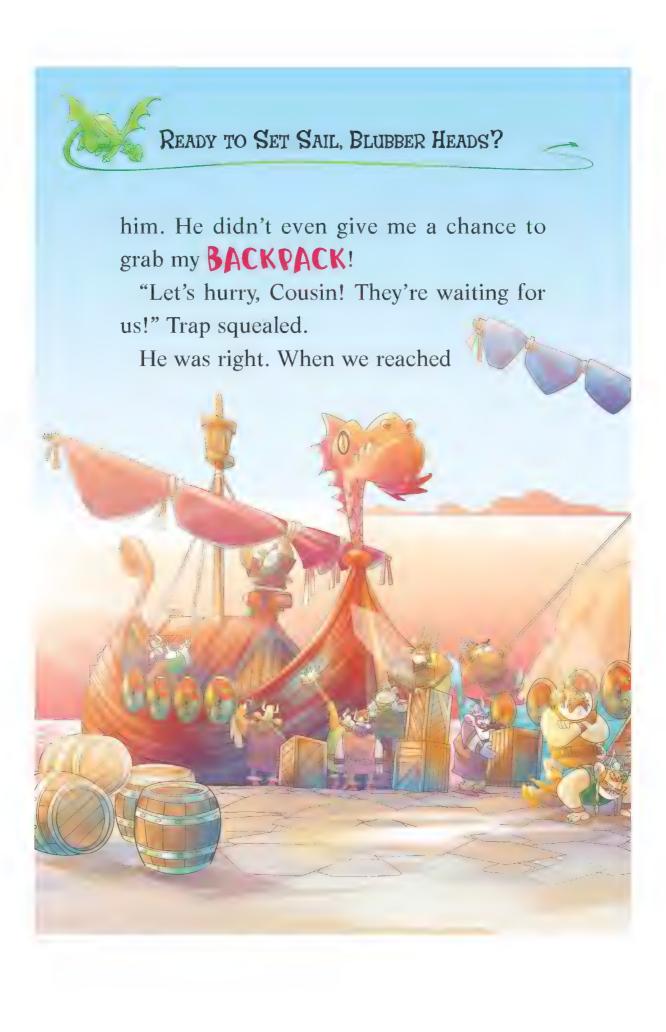
I quickly thought of more excuses. "No, I woke up with a terrible **stomachache** and I have to run to the bathroom. And . . . I think I also caught a **MCEKING** COLD, and I don't want to get everyone sick!"

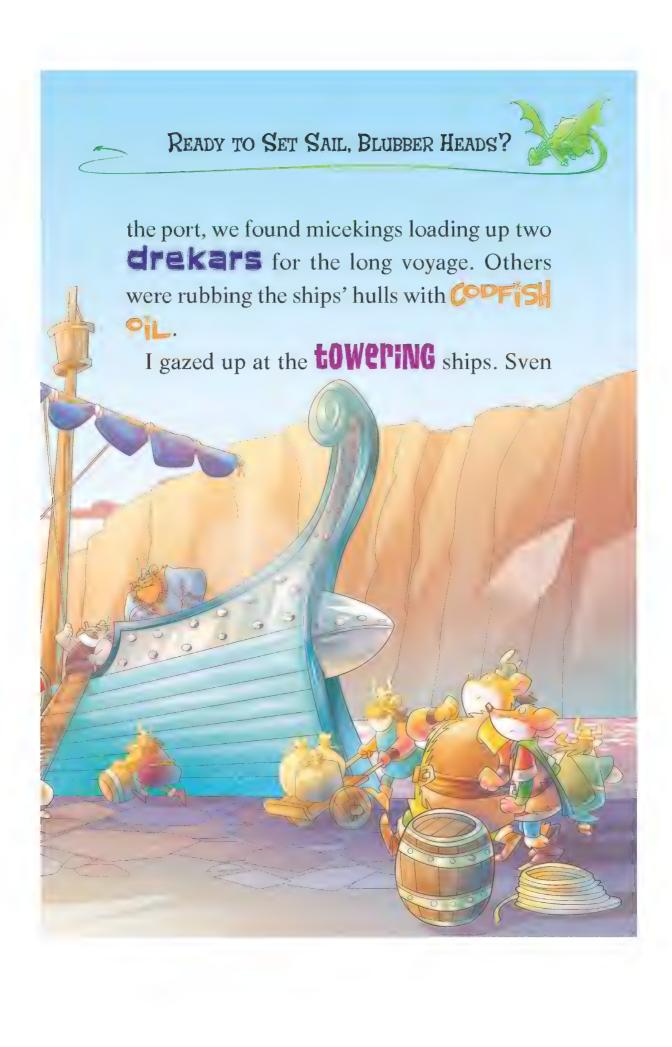
Trap still didn't believe me. "No more **EXCUSES**, Cousin. You don't want to

make Sven ANGRY, do you?" he asked.

By my whiskers, I certainly didn't want to make our village chief angry! At the thought of Sven Shouting at me, I got up and got dressed. As soon as I opened the door, Trap GPABBED me by the paw and DRAGGED me along with









commanded the Majestic Miceking Hero. It was adorned with his official emblems. I tried to go on board, but a mouseking stopped me.



"Inalt! There's no more room!" he said, holding up a paw. "Find another ship."

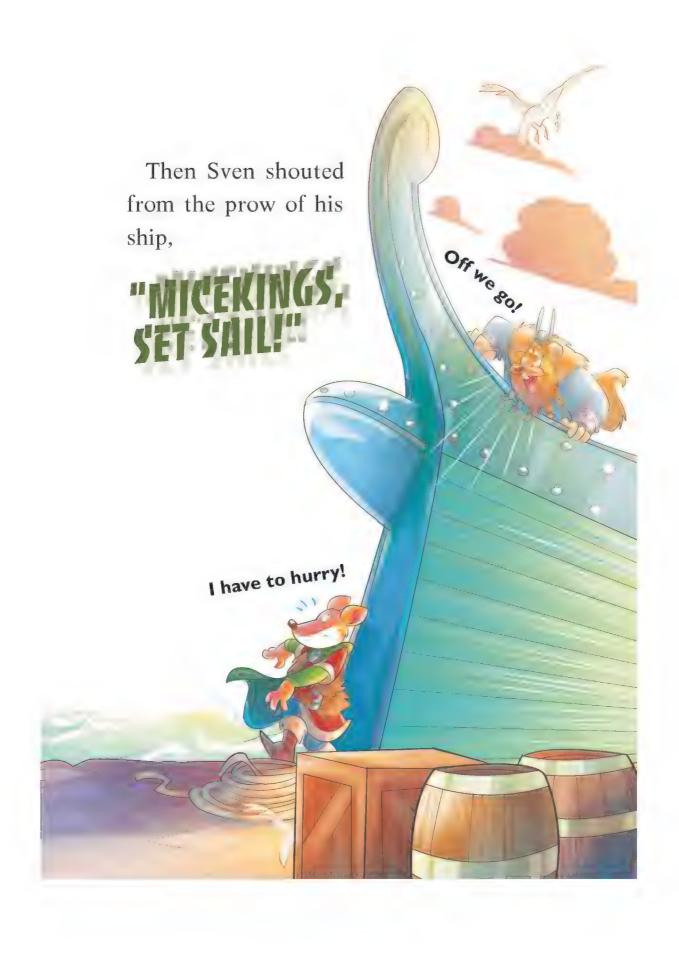
The next ship was the Scourge of the North Sea, with a fearsome dragon on its prow.

But another mouseking stopped me there.

"Sold with smarty-mouseking. We're full! There's no more room!"

"Not even for a Small mouseking like me?" I pleaded.





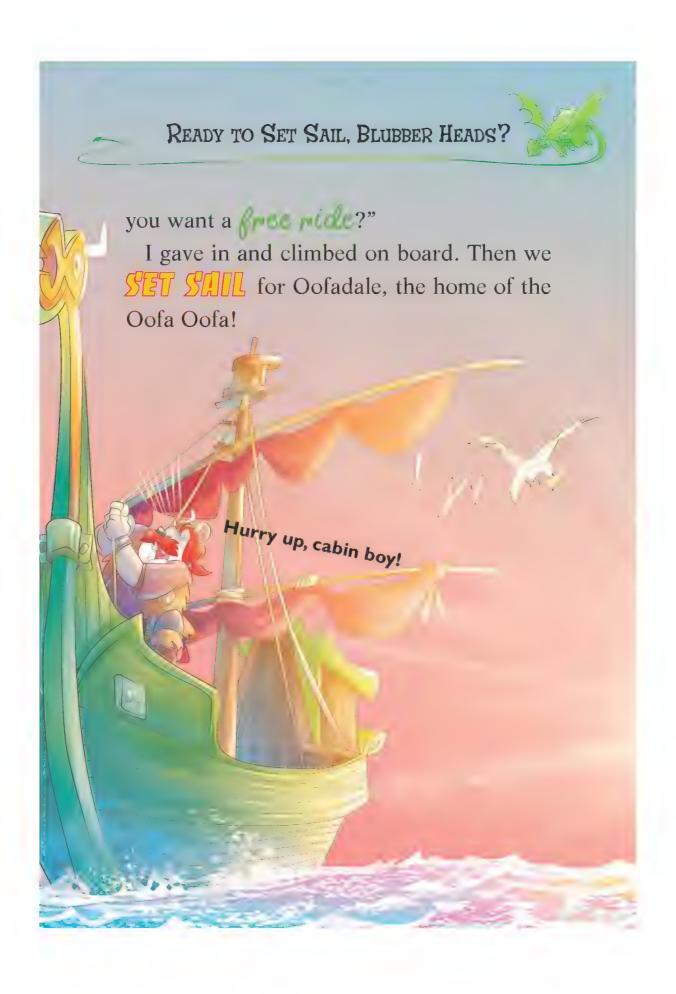


I had left . . . and I didn't like it! The only drekar left was the *Bated Breath*, the **Shaky** tub that belonged to Olaf the Reckless.

And I get drekar-sick!

"Hop on board!" Olaf called out. "Don't







Olaf put me to **WORK**. After I had our cheese supplies and **Cleaned** the deck, he sent me up to the main mast to be the lookout.

Me, who is AFRAID OF HEIGHTS!

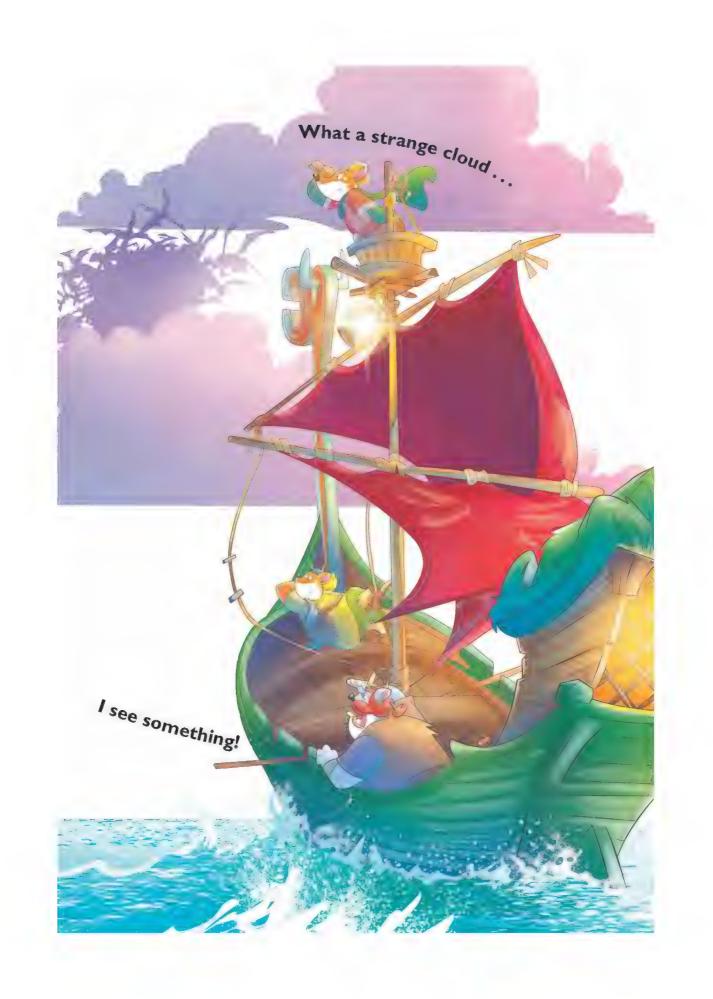
The journey started off smoothly, and a breeze pushed us forward. After a while, though, the sky began to **tarken**. A strange, oddly shaped **cloud** was floating toward us.

Was there a storm coming?

The cloud came closer . . . and **Woley CWeese**, it wasn't a storm cloud at all! It was much worse!

"Dragon attack!" I shrieked.









The micekings on all three ships rushed to take up their Shields, bows, and on us. Four dragons swooped down on us. We could smell their Swampy Stink and see the SMOKE coming from their nostrils.

An orange dragon with a very, very long tongue licked his fangs.

"Purple Beard, look at all that fresh miceking meat!" he called out to his friend.

"You're right, Blue Tail!" the other dragon called back. "We could gobble one for a sssnack and take the othersss back to peast gold!"

"SIZZLE the cook makesss a great miceking ssstew!" said Blue Tail.

"I prefer them roasssted," said Purple Beard.



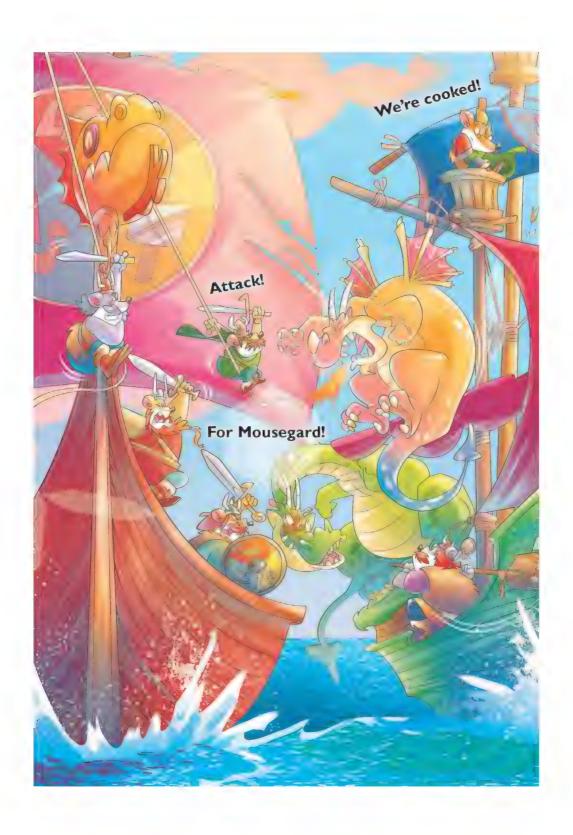


Sven raised his fist in the air. "You won't get a taste of us, you **UGLY LIZARDS!** Micekings, **ATTACK!**"

All of the MCEKINGS threw themselves into the **BATTLE**, fighting off the dragons. Well, almost all. I stayed in the **CROW'S NEST**, so I wouldn't get in anybody's way.

Then the **LOOKOUT** on the Scourge









of the North Sea called out to me.

"Catch this net, smarty-mouseking!"
He TOSSED me one end of the net.

"This is no time to go fishing!" I called back.

But I caught the end of the net anyway, and it hung between the two ships.





Whoosh! A red dragon swooped down and flew right into it! He got all tangled up in the net!

"HOORAY! ONE DOWN!" the other lookout and I shouted.

Meanwhile, the **BATTLE** with the other





Others used Long off the dragons.

Still others **BLASTED** them with jets of **TCY Water** from the North Sea. Everyone knows that dragons hate clean, cold water!

But as bravely as we fought, we were no match for the **COLON**, strong dragons. And there, out in the **OPEN OCEAN**, we had no place to take shelter!

I scanned the horizon, looking for some sign of land.

I spotted a **FOGGY** patch of sky not far off. And as a scholarly mouseking, I knew that **OOFADALE** was almost always surrounded by fog.

Holey cheese, we were close!





If we could make it to **SHORC**, we could take shelter and be **Safe!** I had to think of something, fast!





I quickly came up with a fabumouse plan: We could row at **TOP SPEED** until we were **HIDDEN** in the fog. But how could I let the others know? It wasn't easy to be heard over the **IDDEN** sounds of battle. But I tried.

"We must go into the fog!" I shouted.

"Geronimo, don't be a BLUBBER

Now is not the time to sit

on a log!" Sven shouted back. He had
misunderstood me!

So I tried to act it out. I made rowing motions with my arms.

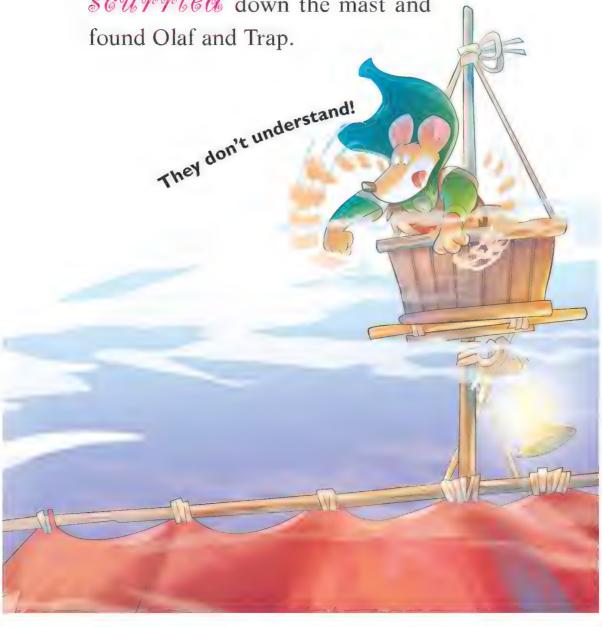
"By my beard! This is not the time to





exercise, **Smarty-mouseking**!" Sven shouted. He just didn't get it!

I had to leave my safe perch. I sew ried down the mast and





I quickly explained my idea.

"GOOD THINKING, smarty-

mouseking!" Olaf agreed.

We ran to the oars.

"MICEKINGS, FULL SPEED AHEAD!" Olaf commanded.

The *Bated Breath* bolted forward. The crews on the other two drekars guessed our plan and followed in our wake toward the

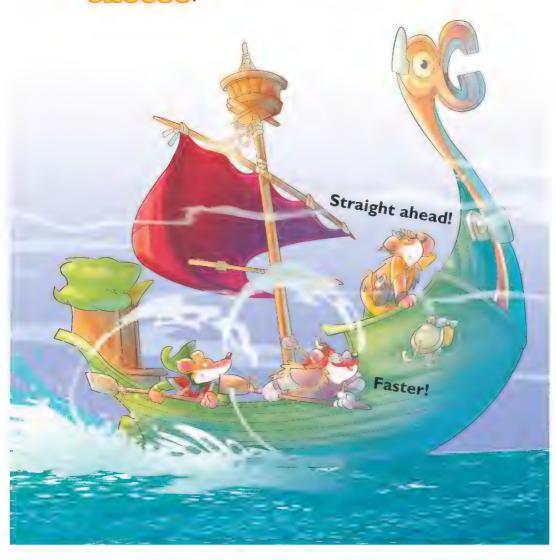
"What do those ta**\$\$\$**ty mouthful**\$\$\$** think they're doing?" Purple Beard asked.

"They won't e**\$\$\$**cape u**\$\$\$!**" said Blue Tail.

Purple Beard roared, "Follow them, fassst!"
Luckily, though, the north wind



started to Low toward Oofadale, and helped us go even faster! Soon we were immersed in a Fos as dense as Moodale.





"By my breath, I can't **\$\$\$**ee a thing!" Blue Tail moaned.

"I think I **\$8\$**ee a drekar in front of me!" said Purple Beard. "Let me bla**\$\$\$**t it with my breath!"

He shot a **Blast** of flame into the fog. "**Hey!**" cried Blue Tail. "You **sss** corched my tail!"





Zzzzzzzzzz! Zzzzzzzzzz!

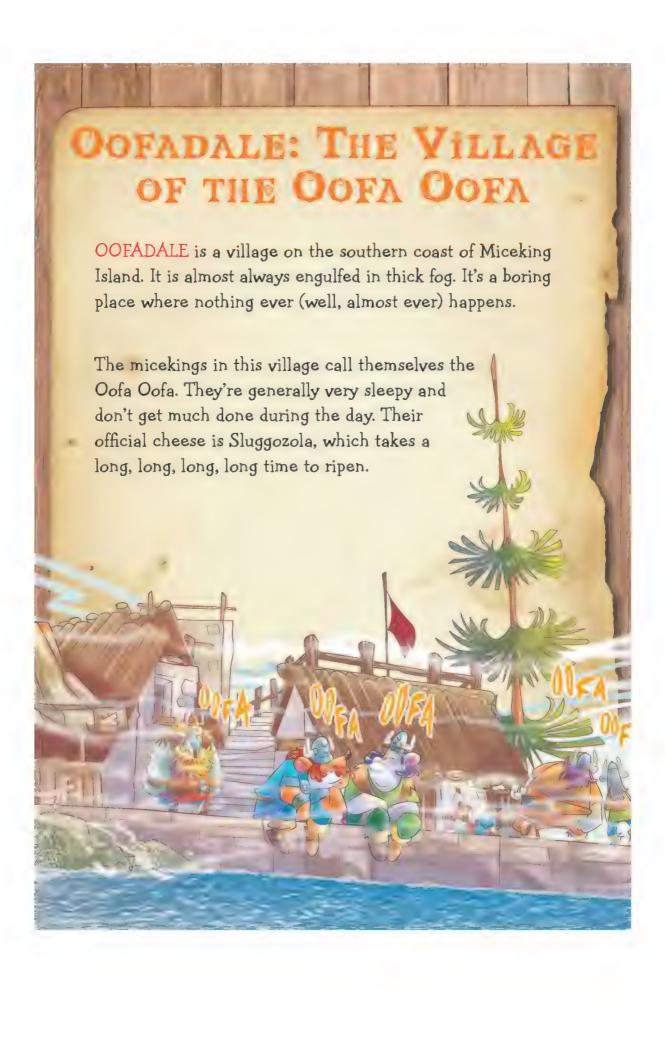
The dragons kept **BUMPING** into each other, and we kept **Sailing** through the fog. Luckily, we quickly **arrived** at the port of Oofadale.

We tied up the drekars at the dock and set out in search of the village chief, YAN THE YAWNER.

We passed by many of the OOFA OOFA, but they were all asleep. They always nap in the afternoon. And in the morning time. And at noon . . . They are known for being very SLEEPY micekings!

"Where is **YAN THE YAWNER**?" Sven asked one of the Oofa Oofa.





Zzzzzzzzzz Zzzzzzzzzz



"ANSWER SVEN THE SHOUTER!"

the micekings yelled.

The villager yawned in response. Then he closed his eyes and fell asleep standing up!

We kept walking until we got

to Snoozy Square, the village center. Sven walked up to another

Oofa Oofa.

"Tell me where I can find your village chief!" he barked.

But this Oofa Oofa was sleeping, too, and didn't wake up.

Furious, Sven stomped to a small building in the middle of the





Zzzzzzzzzz Zzzzzzzzz

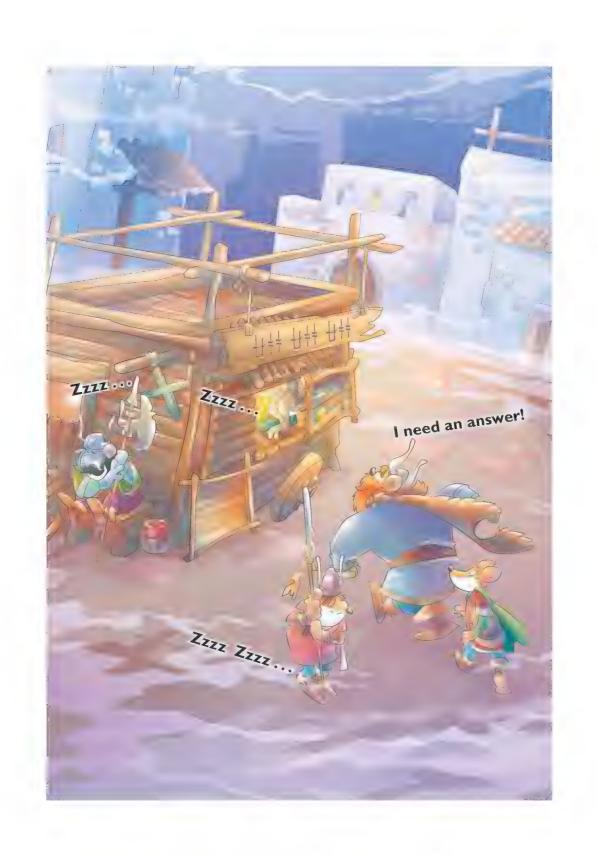
square. I read the runes above the window: OOF OOF OOF. That stands for THE OFFICIAL TOURIST OFFICE OF OOFADALE.

Sven Pounded his fist on the counter. "SHIVERING SQUIDS, do you know who I am?" he shouted at the sleeping rodent working there. "I would you to tell me right now where I can find Yan the Yawner, or I'll have your fur!"

I wouldn't have wanted to be in the place of that Oofa Oofa, When Sven gets **ANGRY**, his loud voice can **CUT** your whiskers!

The rodent opened his eyes Very, Very slowly.

Then he opened his mouth Very, Very, Slowly, as though he were going to speak . . .





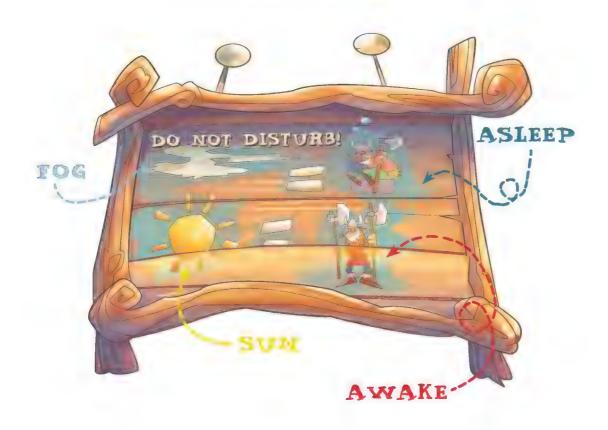
Zzzzzzzzzz Zzzzzzzzzz



But he only snored.

Then I NOTICED something on the wall of the office.

"Chief, take a look at this ${\color{red} {\bf Sign}!}$ " I told Sven.



Zzzzzzzzzz Zzzzzzzzzz



It suddenly made sense. When there's **FOG** in Oofadale (which is most of the time), the villagers take a miceking nap!

"There's NO TIME to waste!" Sven shouted. "As soon as the fog lifts, the dragons will attack. We MUST WAKE UP THESE CHEESEHEADS!"





WAKE UP! WAKE UP! WAKE

Sven began to **SHOUT** orders at all of the **MICEKINGS** from Mouseborg.

"Geronimo and Trap! Go FIND Yan the Yawner!"







Sven gave me a **STERN** look. "Would you rather stay here and **FIGHt** the dragons, smarty-mouseking?" he asked.

I didn't Walt for him to change his mind. I grabbed my cousin and **DRAGGED** him back toward the tourist office. We had to find out where **YAN THE YAWNER** was!





Wake Up! Wake Up! Wake Uuuuup!

Behind us, Sven continued to **SHOUT** orders.

"You, wate up the sleeping Oofa Oofa! You, take the young micekings in this village to safety! The others, come with me!"

Meanwhile, I stared at the sleeping Oofa Oofa at the counter of the tourist office. I had no idea how to wake him up!

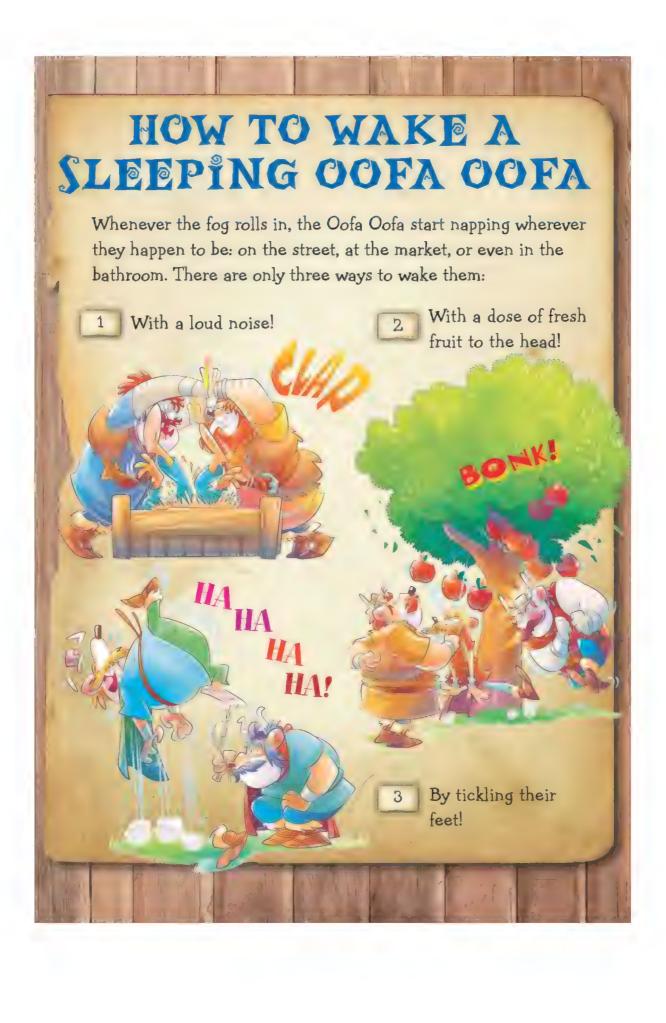
"I'Ve Got tHis, Cousin,"
Trap said.

Then he **clapped** his paws right next to one of the ears of the napping rodent!

Clap! Clap! Clap!

The rodent opened his eyes.

"Oofa! Didn't you (Yawn) read the sign (Yawn)? When there is fog in (Yawn) Oofadale, it's time for a (Yawn) miceking nap," he slowly complained.





Wake Up! Wake Up! Wake Uuuuup!

"Please excuse my cousin's manners," I said. "But this a SUPER-MICEKING EMERGENCY!"

The Oofa Oofa did not move a Whisker at this news.

"We must find Yan the Yawner immediately!" I shrieked.

The rodent Very, Very slowly opened his mouth again.

"Take Oofwood Road (Yawn) to Oofson Way and make a right (Yawn)," he said. "Then take the second right (Yawn), cross the bridge, and turn onto the first street (Yawn) on the left. The (Yawn) fifth house on the right is Yan's. Got it?"

"Um . . . we HOPE so!" Trap and I replied.

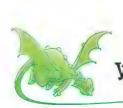
"You won't (Yawn) find him awake," the Oofa Oofa told us. "It's nap time."



"He has to wake up! IT'S AN EMERGENCY!"
I exclaimed.

Trap nudged me. "Hey, do you think we should ask this rodent about the mysterious **letter** we found in the amphora?"





Wake Up! Wake Up! Wake Uuuuup!



But I was already **PULLING** Trap away. "We'll worry about that later! Right now, we have to **5ave** your village from an army of **ferocious** dragons!"

As we **RAN OFF** to find Yan, we heard a **strange alarm** ring through the village.

Yaaawn! Yaaawn! Yaaawn!

It was Oofadale's dragon alarm!

That meant the dragons were close by. Trap and I had to hurry, or else . . .



a pragon's dinner!





The fog was lifting and the dragons had spotted Oofadale! Hungry for miceking meat, they SPED toward the village. There was no time to lose!

Sven pointed to one of the napping Oofa Oofa. "Walle Up, lazybones! Tell us

where the catapults

are, quick, or we'll all be **toasted** like

grilled cheese sandwiches!"

Without opening his eyes, the rodent POINTED to a large



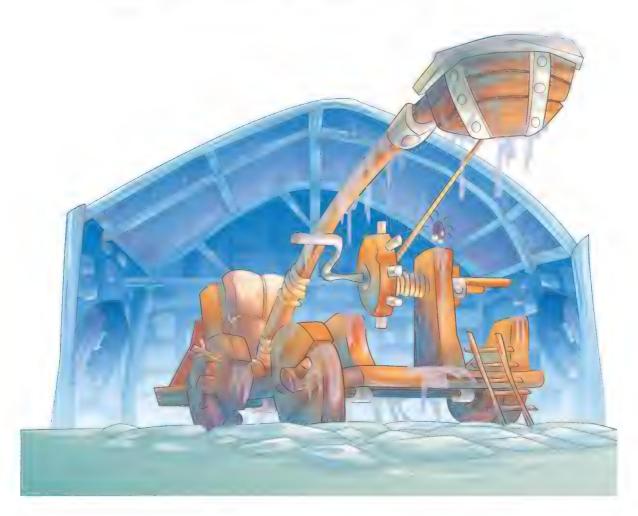
Ruuuuuun!



building on the other side of the square. Sven and the micekings **raced** inside.

"By my beard! These catapults are dusty, RUSTY, and covered in cobwebs!" Sven exclaimed.

Then he frowned. "Let's **meve** them out! We have to at least try."





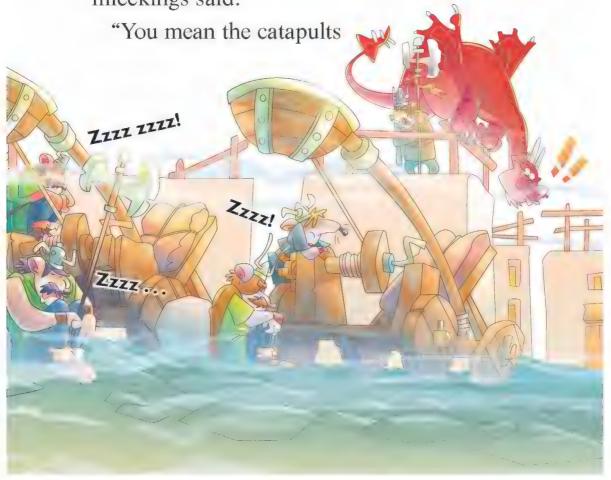
Ruuuuuun!

The micekings of Mouseborg dragged the **HEAVY** catapults out into the square. By that time, the dragons were overhead.

"Now is the moment, my **B O I D** and **b PaV c** micekings," Sven shouted.

"GET READY TO ATTACK!"

"Chief, we need **Pocks**!" one of the micekings said.



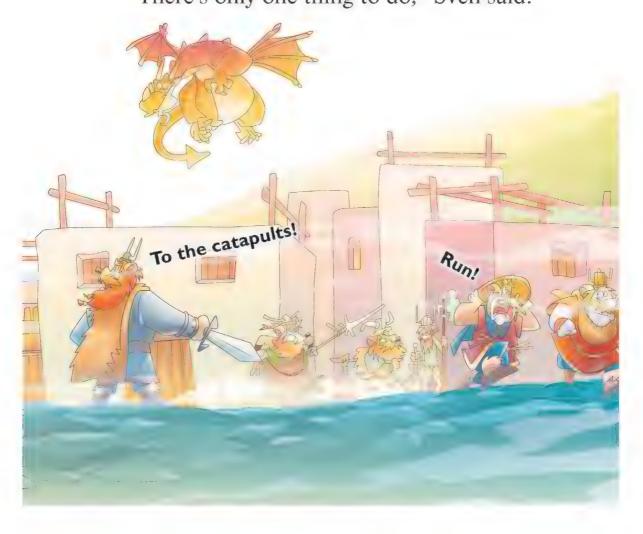
Ruuuuuun!



aren't loaded?" Sven asked. "Oofa Oofa, where are your rocks?"

ZZZZZZZ. The Oofa Oofa were still all napping!

By now the **dragons** were so close, the micekings could smell their **horrible** breath. "There's only one thing to do," Sven said.







"RUUUUUUUN!"

The dragons looked down on the village, **confused**. Some of the micekings (from Mouseborg) were **Parallel** back and forth, looking for rocks. But other micekings (from Oofadale) were **parallel**!

"Why are they **\$\$\$**leeping?" a green dragon asked. "Don't they fear u**\$\$\$**?"





While Sven and our fellow miceking warriors faced the dragons' attack, Trap and I searched for the house of Yan the Yawner.

We made a **right** on Oofa Road. Or was it Oofa Way? Then we made two **LEFTS**... and one **right**... and soon we were as **LDST** as two anchovies in the big sea!

"We were supposed to go LEFT back there, Cousin!" Trap said.

"No, I'm sure we were supposed to go right after the bridge!" I argued. "And then make another right? Or was it a LEFT?"

Great moldy mussels, I







"Yesss! Look!" Blue Tail exclaimed. "It's that SHRIMPY mouseking who sssailed away from usss before!"

"Run, Cousin!" Trap shouted.

I darted after him. He looked over his shoulder.

"Let's SPLIF VP to confuse them!" he yelled.

"Wh-why? I don't want to be alone!" I yelled back.





But Trap was already heading in the opposite direction.

"That mouseking is mine!" Purple Beard shouted, and he **flew** after Trap.

But the dragon wasn't used to flying so low. When he turned the corner to follow Trap, he didn't see the big WOODEN AND IRON sign for the Oofadale blacksmith.

Baaaaam!





He flew into it, smashing his face as FLAT as a flounder!

Meanwhile, I was running as fast as I could. But I ran right into a dead end! When I turned, I saw Blue Tail flying right at me, with his jaws open wide!

Shivering squids, I was as good as fried! I closed my eyes, waiting for the worst.

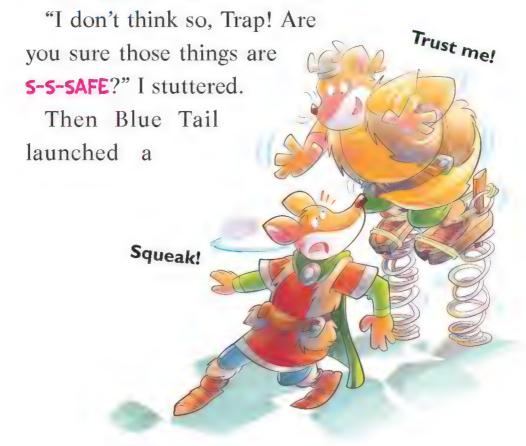




Trap's voice. "Hey, Cousin! Check this out!"

I opened my eyes and saw that Trap had strange springs attached to his feet. He was wearing **SPRING Steppers**!

"HURRY, jump on!" he urged.





Trap's answer. I jumped on, and Trap quickly bounced away.

Boing! Boing! Boing!





Many bounces later (**GQUEAK!** I was

getting motion sick!), we arrived at the home of Yan the

Yawner, the village chief.

Inside we saw two Oofa

Oofa, dozing in

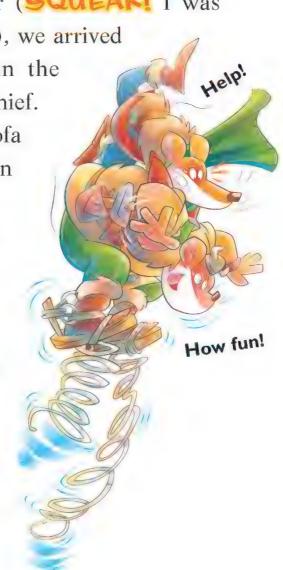
armchairs.

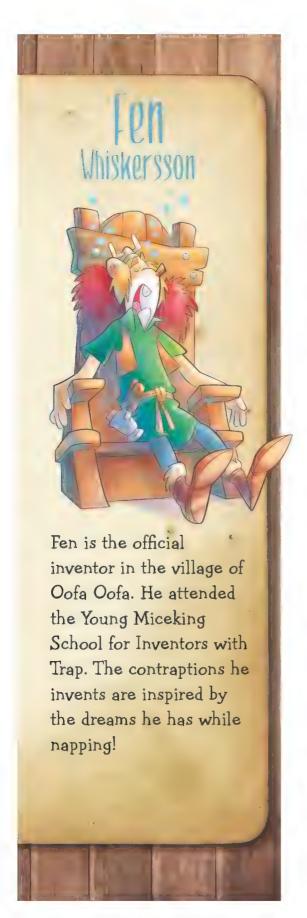
"Greetings,

Oofa friends," I said. "My name is Geronimo Stiltonord, and this is my cousin Trap."

ZZZZZZZZZ.

"We are sorry to wake you, but





we have come all the way from Mouseborg on an IMPORTANT matter," I continued, but Trap interrupted me.

"Fen Whiskersson, is that you?" he cried. He clapped his paws next to one of the sleeping rodents.

The mouse's eyes fluttered open. "Trap, my old inventing buddy, is that really you?"

"It sure is!" Trap replied. The two old friends hugged.



"What good **north wind** brings you to Oofadale?" Fen asked.

"As my cousin said, we're here on an matter," Trap explained. "We need to see Yan the Yawner right away!"

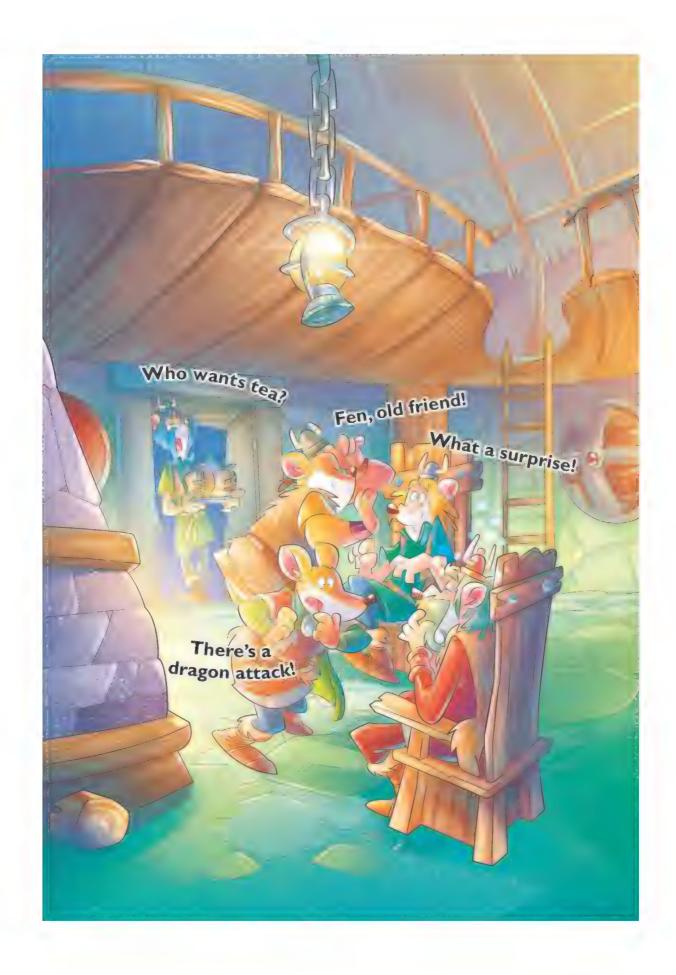
The rodent in the other armchair began to stir. "OOFA! What's with all this racket? Don't you know it's nap time? Who is disturbing my slumber?"

At that moment, a third rodent entered the room, carrying a tray. "Who wants a cup of tea?"

"There is no time for tea!" I cried, but then I stopped. "Hey, aren't you the OOFA OOFA from the tourist office?"

"Correct!" he replied. "My name is Bronk Snorborg."

Then Bronk whispered in my ear. "I'm glad you finally got here," he said. "We





really need to talk about that **letter** you told me about earlier. The one you found in the amphora."

"We can talk about the letter later!" I blurted out. "Right now, we have important news! **Dragons are attacking Oofadale!**"

The other Oofa straightened up in his chair. "Holey cheese! Why didn't you say that IMMEDIATELY?" he cried.

"Are you Yan the Yawner?" I asked.

"Yes, I am!" he said, squinting at me. "And are you sure you're from Mouseborg? Micekings there are usually very tall and strong. You seem very short and softer than a jellyfish."

"And where is your **MICEKING HELMET**?" Fen asked me.

So many unnecessary questions! These two



"Great salty sardines!" I shrieked in exasperation. "There is no time to explain! The dragons are attacking.

DON'T YOU HAVE A RAGON DEFENSE PLAI IN OOFADALE?



Essence of Sea Jasmine

the inventor and YAN the Yawner talked privately for a few minutes. Then Fen motioned for Trap and me to follow him. He led us to a SMALL HUT nearby.

"Welcome to my laboratory!" he exclaimed as he opened the door for us. "It is here that I create my GENIUS inventions. If the answer to our dragon problem is anywhere, it will be here."

Inside the hut was what looked like a great big pile of julk.

Fen dove into the **MOUNTAIN** of junk and started rummaging around.

"Tell me what you're **LOOKING** for, old friend, and I'll help you find it,"



ESSENCE OF SEA JASMINE

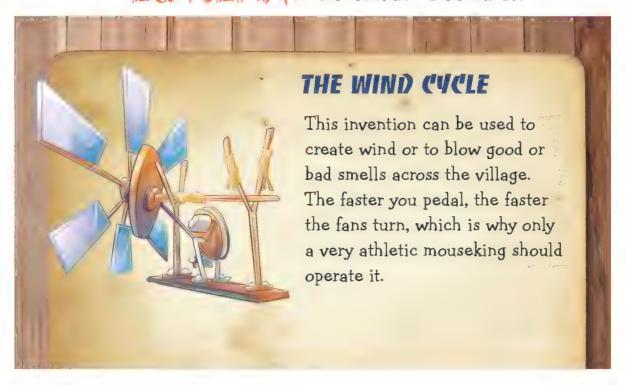
Trap offered.

"It's obvious!" Fen replied. "I am looking for my FARUMOUSE invention designed to **defend** Oofadale from dragons: **THE WIND CYCLE!**"

Trap and I shared a **confused** look. We had no idea what he was talking about!

Then Fen extracted a *strange-looking* contraption from the pile. It had a wheel with two pedals.

"EUREKA!" he cried. "Found it!



ESSENCE OF SEA JASMINE



And in this little bottle is essence of sea jasmine!"

I sniffed it. "It smells very clean! What's it for?"

"We will use the Wind Cycle to spread the of sea jasmine over the

whole village," Fen replied.

"I get it!" Trap exclaimed. "Dragons hate Clean smells. It will drive them away."

"Exactly!" Fen said.

"So where is the highest point in Oofadale?" I asked.

Fen went to the window and pointed. "The top of Wount Mattress!"

I looked out the window and saw only a small hill.

"But that's just a tiny hill," I said.





"But that's the highest mountain in all of Oofadale!" Fen said, sounding offended. "The Wind Cycle must be taken to the very top of the PINE TREE that grows on the mountain's peak."

I started to get a BAD

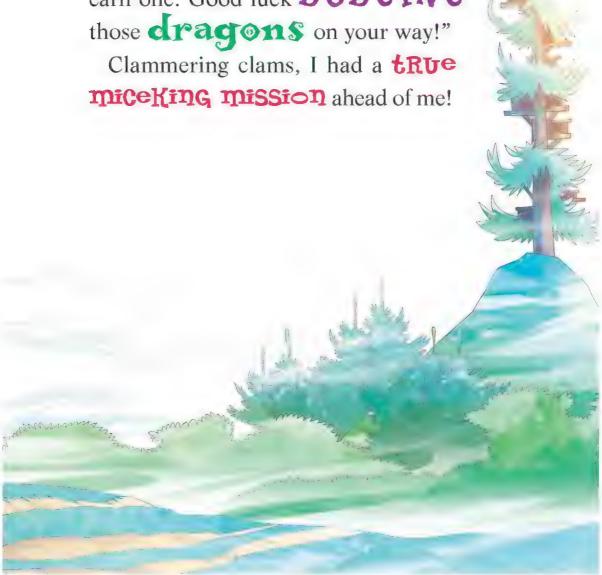
FEELING. "And who,







"It's obvious!" Fen said. "You need to get a miceking helmet, don't you? Well, here is the perfect chance to earn one. Good luck DODGING those dragons on your way!"





Trap and I walked along the path that led to the **PEAK** of Mount Mattress, the tallest . . . *hill* in Oofadale!

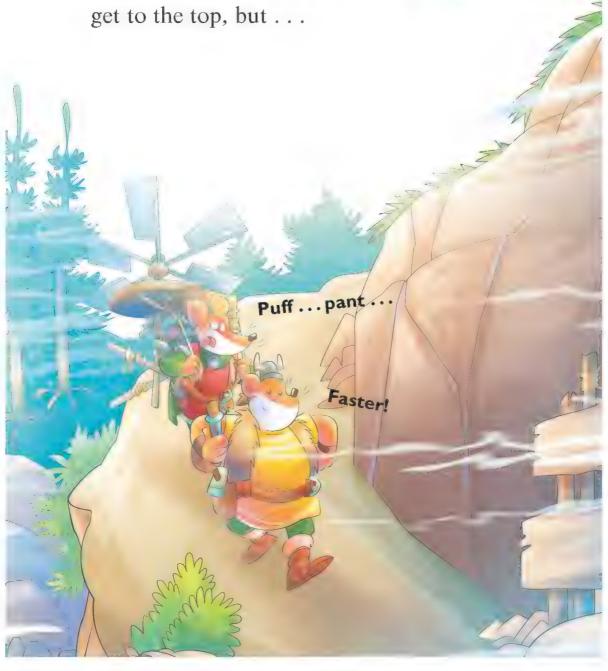
We carried Fen's **VERY HEAVY** invention with us. Or rather, I carried it. Trap carried the **tiny bottle** of sea jasmine essence and a roll of **parchment** with instructions for using the Wind Cycle.

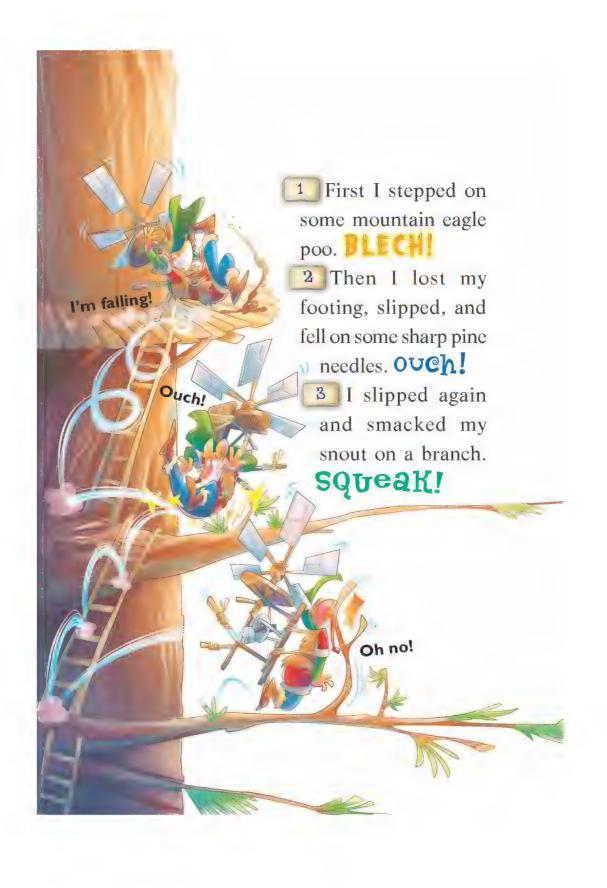
"Couldn't we ... PUFF ... trade ... Pant?" I asked.

"What kind of **MOUSEKING** are you?" Trap asked. "Use your miceking **MUSCICS**, Cousin!"



Finally, we arrived at the base of the pine tree. I started to CLIMB up the ladder to get to the top, but







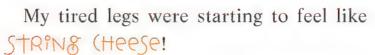
Finally, I reached the **observation** platform at the top of the tree. From there, I could see the **WHOLE VILLAGE** of Oofadale!

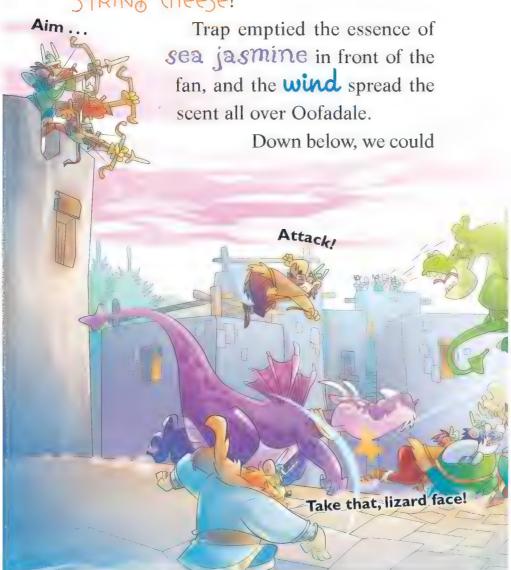
"Get on the Wind Cycle and PEDAL, GERONIMO!" Trap called up to me.

I had to act fast. I hopped on the seat and started to pedal *fast* . . . *faster* . . . *even faster*!





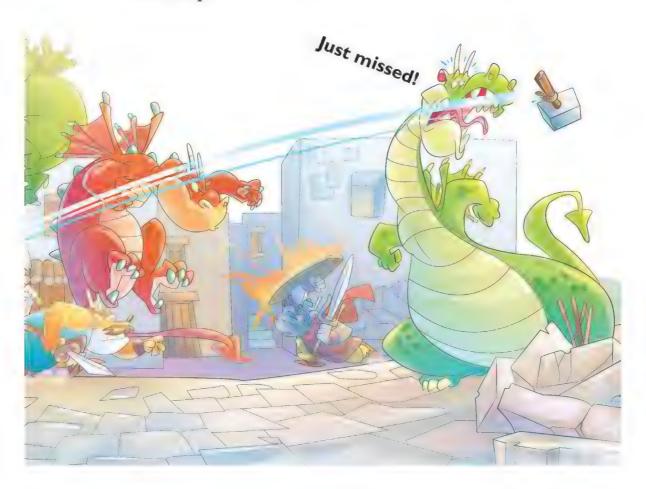






see the brave micekings **battling** the dragons. The Oofa Oofa had finally woken up from their naps and joined the **warriors** from Mouseborg.

"Where is that smarty-mouseking?" **SVEN** shouted, hurling a **hammer** at a green dragon. "He was supposed to bring more help!"





"WATCH OUT, CHIEF!" Olaf shrieked.

The hammer missed the green dragon. The ANGRY dragon grabbed Sven by the tail.

"Now to GOBBLE you up!" the dragon said. Then he suddenly sneezed.
"ACHOO!"

The dragon dropped Sven.



PEDAL, GERONIMO!



In less time than it takes to eat a cheese cracker, all of the dragons were in tears.

"Hammering herrings, what's happening?" Olaf asked. "Why are the dragons Crying?"

The green dragon began to wail. "What iss that terrible sssmell?" he asked. "I can't keep my eyesss open!"

"It's too clean!" whined a red dragon. "I \$\$\$mell soap! And flower\$\$\$! And I can't \$\$\$\$top \$\$\$neezing!

"Fen was right!" I told Trap. "The dragons can't stand the sea jasmine."

The dragons beat a quick retreat, flying off into the clouds one after another.

From the top of the pine tree, Trap and I watched as they fled, crying, **sneezing**, and swerving back and forth.





"It worked! We did it!" Trap and I cheered. Then we happily ran toward the village. We still had to figure where that letter came from.



The miceking warriors #1199E1 one another and cheered when the dragons flew away.

"Micekings work better

when they fight together!

Hip, hip, hooray! Hooray! Hooray!"

Yan the Yawner hugged Sven. "Thank you for bringing that smarty-mouseking!" he said. "He really saved the day."





Then he turned to the rest of us. "Brave Friends from Mouseborg, we thank you for your invaluable help today! We couldn't have done it without you. To celebrate, we will have a grand miceking feast!"

"SO SAYS YAN THE YAWNER!" chanted the Oofa Oofa.

Then Sven approached me. "Geronimo, this time you acted **bravely**, like a true mouseking," he said. "I have decided to wou with a miceking helmet."

WHAT, WHAT, WHAT? I

couldn't believe my ears. At last I would receive my first miceking helmet!

My whiskers were shaking with excitement!





"First, however," Sven continued, "I would like to find out at least what was written in that **MYSTERIOUS** letter from Yan the Yawner!"

Yan looked confused. "I didn't send a letter."

At that moment, Bronk Snorborg from the tourist office stepped forward.

"I think I can **Solve** this mystery," he said.





Sven and Yan both shouted at once. "Speak! We order you!"

"SO SAVS SVEN THE SHOUTER!" chanted the Mouseborg warriors.

"SO SAYS YAN THE YAWNER!" chanted the Oofa Oofa.

Bronk cleared his throat. "Well, you see, I think it might be a **love letter** that I wrote for the lovely Snorina."

"WHAAAAAT?" shouted Sven.

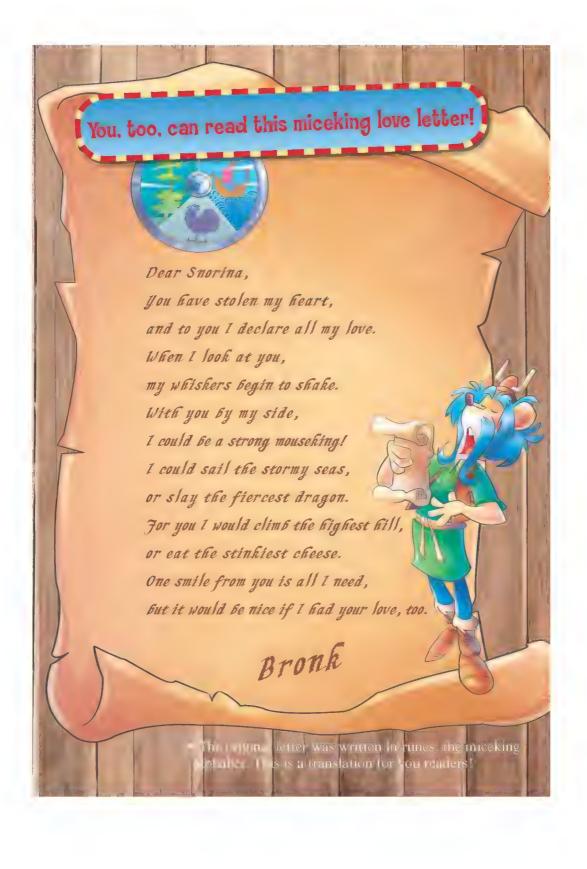
"A love letter?" yelled Yan.

Trap handed the letter to Bronk. "Is this it?"

"Yes!" Bronk cried happily.

"But why is the **official seal** of Oofadale on your letter?" Trap asked Bronk.

"Because I used one of the pieces of parchment that we use at the tourist





office to draw maps," Bronk admitted. "They all have the official coat of arms!"

I had a question, too. "Then why did you hide it in an **AMPHORA** and throw it into the sea?"

"That's not how it happened," Bronk answered. "You see, Snorina is the daughter of the

Oofadale MILKMAN, and every evening she comes to collect the empty milk BOTTLES. I hoped that she would find my letter."

"So how did the amphora end up in the sea?" Trap wanted to know.

"That night there was a **terrible Storm!**" Bronk replied. "A blast of wind
must have carried the amphora to the dock,
and then it **rolled** into the water."

Trap's eyes lit up. "Aha! Then the



current brought it to Mouseborg, where Stocker found it!"

Bronk nodded. "That must be what happened," he said, and then he turned to look at a lovely rodent who was Smiling at him. "And all this time I thought that Shorina didn't return my feelings!"

Snorina stepped forward.

Oh, Bronk,

Snorina stepped forward. "Oh, Bronk! If I had received the letter, I would have told you that I feel the same way about you."

"You mean the letter wasn't a call for help?" Sven fumed. "And you didn't want to attack our village? We arranged an official expedition in grand miceking style just for a LOVE LETTER?"





"It looks that way," Bronk said.

"Why didn't you tell us this as SOON as we arrived?" Sven shouted.

Bronk pointed at me. "I did try to tell someone—that **shrimpy** mouseking over there."

Uh-oh. This was not going to be good.

"Is this True, Geronimo?" Sven asked me.

"W-w-well, yes," I stammered. "B-b-but the dragons were attacking, and . . . "

"You **CHEESENEAD!**" Sven shouted. "First, you **FAILED** to figure out the letter. Then, you could have found out it was just a **love letter**, but you didn't listen.

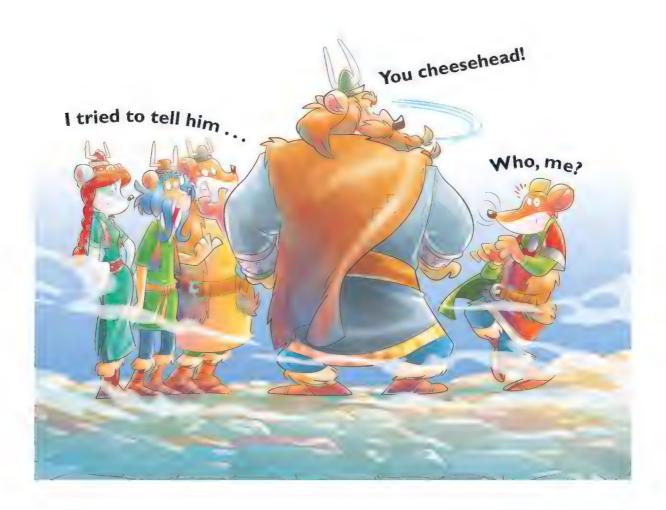
NO MICEKING HELMET FOR YOU!"





"B-b-but the dragons . . ." I tried to explain. "Enough of this. It's time for the **feast**!" Yan yelled.

"SO SAYS YAN THE YAWNER!" cheered all the micekings.





Everyone ate and talked and laughed. I sat outside all ALAME, thinking about the miceking helmet that I had WON and LOST in a matter of minutes. Would I ever be able to show Thora that I was a truly brave mouseking?

Then Bronk and Snorina approached me.

"Thank you for bringing the letter back to us, Geronimo," Bronk said. "It brought Snorina and me together."

"Even without a helmet, you are **VeRy BRaVe**," she said. "One day you will win over your own miceking love, I'm sure."

I smiled. "Thank you," I said. "I know one day I will **finally** get my miceking helmet!"

But that's another miceking story, for another miceking time!









Don't miss any adventures of the Micekings!



#1 Attack of the Dragons



#2 The Famouse Fjord Race



#3 Pull the Dragon's Tooth!

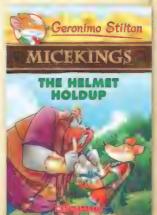


#4 Stay Strong, Geronimo!



#5 The Mysterious Message

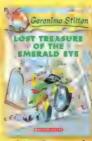
Up Next:



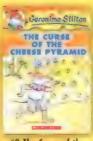
#6 The Helmet Holdup



Be sure to read all my fabumouse adventures!



#1 Lost Treasure of the Emerald Eye



#2 The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid



#3 Cat and Mouse in a Haunted House



#4 I'm Too Fond of My Fur!



#5 Four Mice Deep in the Jungle



#6 Paws Off, Cheddarface!



#7 Red Pizzas for a Blue Count



#8 Attack of the Bandit Cats



#9 A Fabumouse Vacation for Geronimo



#10 All Because of a Cup of Coffee



#11 It's Halloween, You 'Fraidy Mouse!



#12 Merry Christmas, Geronimo!



#13 The Phantom of



#14 The Temple of the Ruby of Fire



#15 The Mona Mousa Code



#16 A Cheese-Colored Camper



#17 Watch Your Whiskers, Stilton!



#18 Shipwreck on the Pirate Islands



#19 My Name Is Stilton, Geronimo Stilton



#20 Surf's Up, Geronimo!



#21 The Wild, Wild West



#22 The Secret of Cacklefur Castle



A Christmas Tale





#24 Field Trip to Niagara Falls



#25 The Search for Sunken Treasure



#26 The Mummy with No Name



#27 The Christmas **Toy Factory**



#28 Wedding Crasher



#29 Down and Out Down Under



#30 The Mouse Island Marathon



#31 The Mysterious Cheese Thief



Christmas Catastrophe



#32 Valley of the Giant Skeletons



#33 Geronimo and the Gold Medal Mystery



#34 Geronimo Stilton, Secret Agent



#35 A Very Merry Christmas



#36 Geronimo's



#37 The Race Across America



#38 A Fabumouse School Adventure



#39 Singing Sensation



#40 The Karate Mouse



#41 Mighty Mount Kilimanjare



#42 The Peculiar **Pumpkin Thief**



#43 I'm Not a Supermouse!



#44 The Giant Diamond Robbery



#45 Save the White Whale!



#46 The Haunted Castle





#48 The Mystery in





#49 The Way of

the Samurai



#50 This Hotel Is

Haunted!







the Jungle



Stilton!







The Hunt for the















The Hunt for the Secret Papyrus

#63 The Cheese Experiment











#65 Bollywood Burglary

The Hunt for the Hundredth Key

#66 Operation: Secret Recipe

#67 The Chocolate Chase



Don't miss any of my special edition adventures!



THE KINGDOM OF FANTASY



THE QUEST FOR PARADISE:
THE RETURN TO THE KINGDOM OF FANTASY



THE AMAZING
VOYAGE:
THE THIRD ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



THE DRAGON
PROPHECY:
THE FOURTH ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



THE VOLCANO
OF FIRE:
THE FIFTH ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



THE SEARCH
FOR TREASURE:
THE SIXTH ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



THE ENCHANTED CHARMS:
THE SEVENTH ADVENTURE IN THE KINGDOM OF FANTASY



THE PHOENIX
OF DESTINY:
AN EPIC KINGDOM OF
FANTASY ADVENTURE



THE HOUR OF MAGIC:
THE EIGHTH ADVENTURE IN THE KINGDOM OF FANTASY



THE WIZARD'S
WAND:
THE NINTH ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF EANTASY



THE SHIP OF SECRETS: THE TENTH ADVENTURE IN THE KINGDOM OF FANTASY



THE DRAGON
OF FORTUNE:
AN EPIC KINGDOM OF
FANTASY ADVENTURE



THE JOURNEY
THROUGH TIME



BACK IN TIME THE SECOND JOURNEY THROUGH TIME



THE RACE AGAINST TIME: THE THIRD JOURNEY THROUGH TIME



LOST IN TIME:



Don't miss any of these exciting Thea Sisters adventures!



Thea Stilton and the Ghost of the Shipwreck



Thea Stilton and the Secret City



Thea Stilton and the Mystery in Paris



Thea Stilton and the

Thea Stilton and the Cherry Blossom Adventure



Thea Stilton and the Star Castaways



Thea Stilton: Big Trouble in the Big Apple



Thea Stilton and the Ice Treasure



Thea Stilton and the Secret of the Old Castle



Thea Stilton and the Blue Scarab Hunt



Theo Stilton and the Prince's Emerald



Thea Stilton and the Mystery on the Orient Express



Thea Stilton and the Dancing Shadows



Thea Stilton and the Legend of the Fire Flowers



Thea Stilton and the Spanish Dance Mission



Thea Stilton and the Journey to the Lion's Den



Thea Stilton and the Great Tulip Heist



Thea Stilton and the Tropical Treasure



Thea Stilton and the Chocolate Sabotage



Thea Stilton and the Hollywood Hoax



Thea Stilton and the Missing Myth



Thea Stilton and the Madagascar Madness

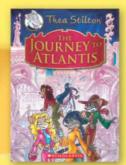


Thea Stilton and the Lost Letters



Thea Stilton and the Frozen Fiasco

And check out my fabumouse special editions!



THEA STILTON: THE JOURNEY TO ATLANTIS



THEA STILTON: THE SECRET OF THE FAIRIES



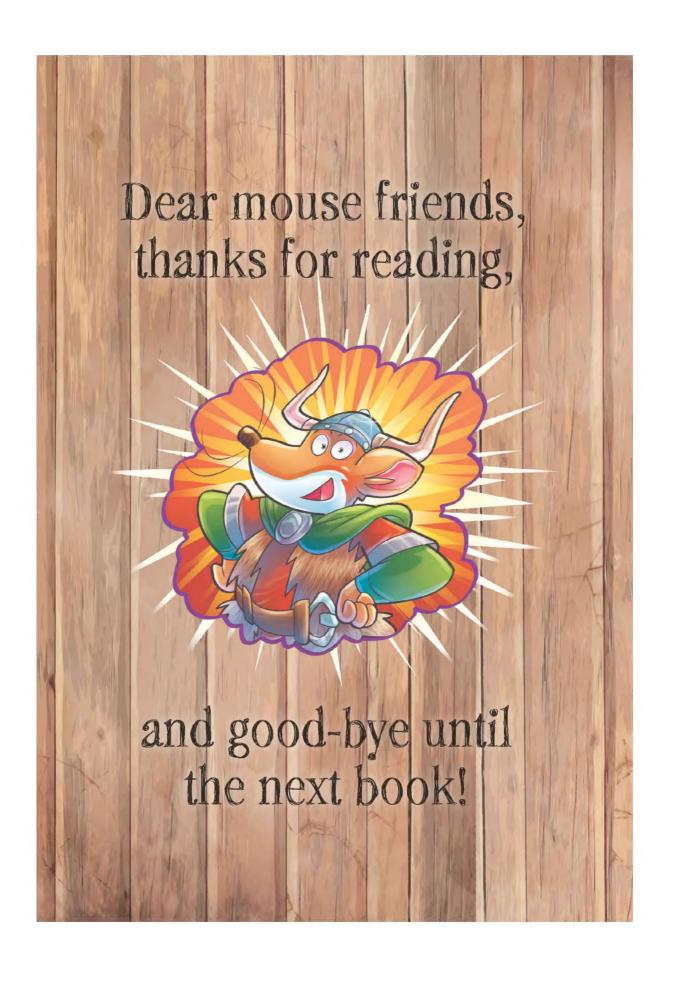
THEA STILTON: THE SECRET OF THE SNOW



THEA STILTON: THE CLOUD CASTLE



THEA STILTON: THE TREASURE OF THE SEA



WHO IS Geronimo Stiltonord?



He is a mouseking – the Geronimo Stilton of the ancient far north! He lives with his brawny and brave clan in the village of Mouseborg. From sailing frozen waters to facing fiery dragons, every day is an adventure for the micekings!

THE MYSTERIOUS MESSAGE

The micekings have received a mysterious message in a bottle! Unfortunately, most of it has been damaged by water — but Geronimo can tell it's from the Oofa Oofa, the laziest rodents in the ancient far north. The micekings set sail to Oofadale, in case the Oofa Oofa are in trouble. But on their way, the dragons attack! Fjords and fiddlesticks, what an adventure!



www.scholastic.com/geronimostilton www.geronimostilton.com



More leveling information for this book: www.scholastic.com/readinglevel